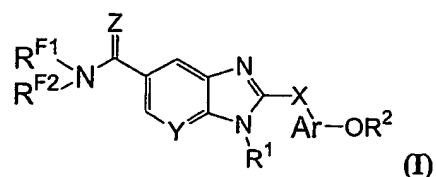


What is claimed is:

1. A compound of formula (I) or pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof:



wherein

- 5 R^{F1} and R^{F2} are independently electron-withdrawing groups;
 Z is selected from $O=$ and $S=$;
 R^1 is selected from C_{1-10} alkyl; C_{1-10} alkyl substituted by at least one of halogen, cyano, acetoxymethyl and nitro; C_{2-10} alkenyl; C_{2-10} alkenyl substituted by at least one of halogen, cyano, acetoxymethyl and nitro; C_{2-10} alkynyl; C_{2-10} alkynyl substituted by at least one of halogen, cyano, acetoxymethyl and nitro; R^3R^4N-
10 C_{1-6} alkyl; $R^3R^4NC(=O)-C_{1-6}$ alkyl; R^3O-C_{1-6} alkyl; $R^3OC(=O)-C_{1-6}$ alkyl; $R^3C(=O)-C_{1-6}$ alkyl; $R^3C(=O)NR^3-C_{1-6}$ alkyl; $R^3R^4NSO_2-C_{1-6}$ alkyl; $R^3CSO_2N(R^4)-C_{1-6}$ alkyl; $R^3R^4NC(=O)N(R^5)-C_{1-6}$ alkyl; $R^3R^4NSO_2N(R^5)-C_{1-6}$ alkyl; aryl- C_{1-6} alkyl; aryl- $C(=O)-C_{1-6}$ alkyl; heterocyclyl- C_{1-6} alkyl; heterocyclyl- $C(=O)-C_{1-6}$ alkyl; substituted aryl-
15 C_{1-6} alkyl; substituted aryl- $C(=O)-C_{1-6}$ alkyl; substituted heterocyclyl- C_{1-6} alkyl; substituted heterocyclyl- $C(=O)-C_{1-6}$ alkyl; and C_{1-10} hydrocarbylamino;
 R^2 is selected from C_{1-6} alkyl, substituted C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{2-6} alkenyl, substituted C_{2-6} alkenyl, C_{2-6} alkynyl, substituted C_{2-6} alkynyl, C_{3-6} cycloalkyl, substituted C_{3-6} cycloalkyl, aryl, substituted aryl, and C_{5-6} heteroaryl, and substituted
20 C_{5-6} heteroaryl;
 R^3 , R^4 and R^5 are independently selected from -H, C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{2-6} alkenyl, C_{2-6} alkynyl, and a divalent C_{1-6} group that together with another divalent C_{1-6} group forms a portion of a ring;
 X is a C_{1-10} divalent group that separates groups connected thereto by one or
25 two atoms;
 Ar is a C_{4-12} divalent aromatic group; and
 Y is selected from $-CH=$ and $-N=$.

2. The compound as claimed in claim 1, wherein

R^{F1} and R^{F2} are independently C_{1-6} alkyl substituted by one or more groups selected from -F, -Cl, -Br, -NO₂, -CN, -OH, -CHO, -C(=O)-R' and -OR', wherein R' is a C_{1-3} alkyl.

5 3. The compound as claimed in claim 1, wherein

R^{F1} and R^{F2} are independently selected from -CF₃, -CH₂CF₃, -CH₂CHF₂, -CHFCH₂F, -CHFCHF₂, -CHFCH₂F, -CF₂CF₃, -CF₂CH₃, -CF₂CH₂F, -CF₂CHF₂, -CF₃, -CH₂CCl₃, -CH₂CHCl₂, -CH₂CBr₃, -CH₂CHBr₂, -CH₂NO₂, -CH₂CH₂NO₂, -CH₂CN, -CH₂CH₂CN, and -CH₂CH₂OCH₃.

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4. The compound as claimed in claim 1, wherein R^{F1} and R^{F2} are independently C_{1-6} groups that comprise at least 30% fluorine by weight and Z is O=.

5. The compound as claimed in claim 1, wherein R^1 is selected from C_{1-10} alkyl;
 15 C_{1-10} alkyl substituted by at least one of halogen, cyano, acetoxymethyl and nitro; C_{2-10} alkenyl; C_{2-10} alkenyl substituted by at least one of halogen, cyano, acetoxymethyl and nitro; C_{2-10} alkynyl; C_{2-10} alkynyl substituted by at least one of halogen, cyano, acetoxymethyl and nitro; $R^3R^4N-C_{1-6}$ alkyl; $R^3R^4NC(=O)-C_{1-6}$ alkyl; R^3O-C_{1-6} alkyl; $R^3OC(=O)-C_{1-6}$ alkyl; $R^3C(=O)-C_{1-6}$ alkyl; $R^3C(=O)NR^3-C_{1-6}$ alkyl; $R^3R^4NSO_2-$
 20 C_{1-6} alkyl; $R^3CSO_2N(R^4)-C_{1-6}$ alkyl; $R^3R^4NC(=O)N(R^5)-C_{1-6}$ alkyl; $R^3R^4NSO_2N(R^5)-C_{1-6}$ alkyl; aryl- C_{1-6} alkyl; aryl-C(=O)- C_{1-6} alkyl; heterocyclyl- C_{1-6} alkyl; heterocyclyl-C(=O)- C_{1-6} alkyl; substituted aryl- C_{1-6} alkyl; substituted aryl-C(=O)- C_{1-6} alkyl; substituted heterocyclyl- C_{1-6} alkyl; substituted heterocyclyl-C(=O)- C_{1-6} alkyl; and C_{1-10} hydrocarbylamino;

25 R^2 is selected from C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{1-6} alkyl substituted by at least one fluorine, C_{2-6} alkenyl, C_{2-6} alkenyl substituted by at least one fluorine, C_{2-6} alkynyl, C_{2-6} alkynyl substituted by at least one fluorine, C_{3-6} cycloalkyl, substituted C_{3-6} cycloalkyl, aryl, substituted aryl, and C_{5-6} heteroaryl, and substituted C_{5-6} heteroaryl;

R^3 , R^4 and R^5 are independently selected from -H, C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{2-6} alkenyl,
 30 C_{2-6} alkynyl, and a divalent C_{1-6} group that together with another divalent C_{1-6} group forms a portion of a ring; and

X is selected from $-\text{NR}^6-$, $-\text{C}(=\text{O})-$, $-\text{CH}_2-\text{CH}_2-$, $-\text{CH}=\text{CH}-$, $-\text{O}-$, $-\text{C}(\text{R}^6)(\text{R}^7)-$, and $-\text{S}(\text{O})_n-$, wherein n is 0, 1 or 2, wherein R^6 and R^7 are independently C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{2-6} alkenyl, C_{2-6} alkynyl, C_{1-6} alkoxy, $-\text{OH}$, or $-\text{H}$.

- 5 6. A compound according to Claim 1,
wherein:

R^1 is selected from C_{1-8} alkyl; C_{2-8} alkenyl; C_{2-8} alkynyl; aryl- C_{1-6} alkyl; aryl- C_{1-6} alkyl with the aryl substituted by at least one group selected from C_{1-6} alkyl, acetoxymethyl, nitro and halogen; $\text{R}^8\text{R}^9\text{NC}_{1-6}$ alkyl; $\text{R}^8\text{OC}_{1-6}$ alkyl; cycloalkyl-
10 C_{1-6} alkyl; heterocycloalkyl- C_{1-6} alkyl; heterocycloalkyl- C_{1-6} alkyl with the heterocycloalkyl thereof substituted by at least one group selected from C_{1-8} alkyl, acetoxymethyl, nitro and halogen; C_{1-6} alkylaryl; C_{1-6} alkyl- $\text{C}(=\text{O})-$; C_{6-8} aryl- $\text{C}(=\text{O})-$; C_{4-8} heteroaryl- $\text{C}(=\text{O})-$; heteroaryl- C_{1-6} alkyl; heteroaryl- C_{1-6} alkyl with the heteroaryl thereof substituted by at least one group selected from C_{1-6} alkyl, acetoxymethyl, nitro
15 and halogen; and R^NC_{1-6} alkyl;

R^2 is selected from $-\text{CH}_3$, $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_3$, $-\text{CH}(\text{CH}_3)_2$, C_{3-6} cycloalkyl, $-\text{CH}_2\text{CF}_3$, $-\text{CHF}_2$, $-\text{CF}_3$ and aryl;

R^N is an oxidized pyridyl wherein the nitrogen atom on the pyridyl ring is in an oxidized state (N^+-O^-);

20 Ar is selected from an arylene; an heteroarylene; an arylene substituted by at least one group selected from C_{1-6} alkyl, halogen, trifluoromethyl, cyano, nitro, hydroxy and C_{1-6} alkoxy; and an heteroarylene substituted by at least one group selected from C_{1-6} alkyl, halogen, trifluoromethyl, cyano, nitro, hydroxy and C_{1-6} alkoxy; and

25 R^8 and R^9 are independently selected from $-\text{H}$ and C_{1-6} alkyl.

7. The compound according to claim 6,

wherein the arylene is *para*-arylene; and the heteroarylene is selected from six-membered ring *para*-heteroarylene and five-membered ring *meta*-heteroarylene.

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8. A compound according to Claim 1,
wherein:

R¹ is selected from ethyl, propyl, allyl, isopentyl, benzyl, dimethylaminoethyl, 4-pyridylmethyl, 2-pyridylmethyl, 1-pyrrolylethyl, cyclopropylmethyl, cyclobutylmethyl, cyclopentylmethyl, cyclohexylmethyl, 2-pyrrolidylmethyl, 3-pyrrolidylmethyl, N-methyl-2-pyrrolidylmethyl, N-methyl-3-pyrrolidylmethyl, 2-piperidylmethyl, 3-piperidylmethyl, 4-piperidylmethyl, N-methyl-2-piperidylmethyl, N-methyl-3-piperidylmethyl, N-methyl-4-piperidylmethyl, 3-thienylmethyl, 2-tetrahydrofuranylmethyl, 3-tetrahydrofuranylmethyl, 2-tetrahydropyranylmethyl, 3-tetrahydropyranylmethyl, 4-tetrahydropyranylmethyl, (2-nitrothiophene-5-yl)methyl, (1-methyl-1H-imidazole-2-yl)methyl, (5-(acetoxymethyl)-2-furanylmethyl, (2,3-dihydro-1H-isoindeole-1-yl)methyl, and 5-(2-methylthiazolyl);

R² is selected from -CH₃, -CH₂CH₃, -CH(CH₃)₂, -CH₂CF₃, CF₃, cyclopropyl, cyclobutyl, cyclopentyl, cyclohexyl and phenyl;

R^{F1} and R^{F2} are -CH₂CF₃ and Z is O=;

Ar is selected from a *para*-arylene; a *para*-arylene substituted with C₁₋₆alkyl, halogen, trifluoromethyl, cyano, nitro, hydroxy and C₁₋₆alkoxy; a six-membered ring *para*-heteroarylene; and a six-membered ring *para*-heteroarylene substituted with a group selected from C₁₋₆alkyl, halogen, trifluoromethyl, cyano, nitro, hydroxy and C₁₋₆alkoxy.

9. A compound according to Claim 1, wherein:

R^{F1} and R^{F2} are -CH₂CF₃, and Z is O=;

R² is -CH₂CH₃;

Ar is selected from *para*-phenylene and *para*-pyridylene; and

X is selected from -CH₂- and -CH(CH₃)-.

10. A compound according to claim 1, wherein said compound is selected from:

2-[(4-Ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1-(3-methylbutyl)-N,N-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1H-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;

1-(Cyclopropylmethyl)-2-[(4-ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-N,N-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1H-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;

- 1-(Cyclohexylmethyl)-2-[(4-ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-*N,N*-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;
- 2-[(4-Ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1-(2-furanylmethyl)-*N,N*-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;
- 5 2-[(4-Ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1-[(2*S*)-2-pyrrolidinylmethyl]-*N,N*-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;
- 2-[(4-Ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1-[(2*R*)-2-pyrrolidinylmethyl]-*N,N*-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;
- 2-[(4-ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1-(4-pyridinylmethyl)-*N,N*-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;
- 10 2-[1-(4-Ethoxyphenyl)ethyl]-1-(4-pyridinylmethyl)-*N,N*-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;
- 2-[(4-Ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1-[(tetrahydro-2*H*-pyran-4-yl)methyl]-*N,N*-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;
- 15 2-[(4-Ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1-[(2*R*)-tetrahydro-2-furanyl]methyl]-*N,N*-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;
- 2-[(4-Ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1-[(2*S*)-tetrahydro-2-furanyl]methyl]-*N,N*-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;
- 2-[(4-Ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1-[(tetrahydro-2*H*-pyran-2-yl)methyl]-*N,N*-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;
- 20 2-[(4-Ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1-[(2*R*)-2-piperidinylmethyl]-*N,N*-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;
- 2-[(5-Ethoxy-2-pyridyl)methyl]-1-[(tetrahydro-2*H*-pyran-4-yl)methyl]-*N,N*-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;
- 25 2-[(5-Ethoxy-2-pyridinyl)methyl]-1-(3-methylbutyl)-*N,N*-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;

- 2-[(4-Ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1-[[*(2R)*-1-methyl-2-pyrrolidinyl]methyl]-*N,N*-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;
- 2-[(4-Ethoxyphenyl)methyl]-1-[[*(2R)*-1-methyl-2-piperidinyl]methyl]-*N,N*-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;
- 5 2-[(5-Ethoxy-2-pyridinyl)methyl]-1-[[*(2R)*-2-pyrrolidinylmethyl]-*N,N*-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;
- 2-[1-(4-Ethoxyphenyl)ethyl]-1-[[*(2R)*-2-pyrrolidinylmethyl]-*N,N*-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;
- 2-[(5-Ethoxy-2-pyridinyl)methyl]-1-[[*(2R)*-1-methyl-2-piperidinyl]methyl]-*N,N*-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;
- 10 bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;
- 2-[(5-Ethoxy-2-pyridinyl)methyl]-1-[[*(2R)*-1-methyl-2-pyrrolidinyl]methyl]-*N,N*-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;
- 1-(Cyclobutylmethyl)-2-(4-ethoxybenzyl)-*N,N*-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;
- 15 1-(Cyclobutylmethyl)-2-[(5-ethoxypyridin-2-yl)methyl]-*N,N*-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;
- 1-(Cyclopentylmethyl)-2-[(5-ethoxypyridin-2-yl)methyl]-*N,N*-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;
- 2-(4-Ethoxybenzyl)-1-[(*2S*)-piperidin-2-ylmethyl]-*N,N*-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;
- 20 2-[(5-Ethoxypyridin-2-yl)methyl]-1-(3-furylmethyl)-*N,N*-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;
- 2-[(5-Ethoxypyridin-2-yl)methyl]-1-(3-thienylmethyl)-*N,N*-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;
- 25 1-(Cyclohexylmethyl)-2-[(5-ethoxypyridin-2-yl)methyl]-*N,N*-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;

1-(Cyclohexylmethyl)-2-[(5-isopropoxy-pyridin-2-yl)methyl]-*N,N*-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;

2-(4-Ethoxybenzyl)-1-[(4-methylmorpholin-3-yl)methyl]-*N,N*-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;

5 2-[(5-Ethoxypyridin-2-yl)methyl]-1-[(4-methylmorpholin-3-yl)methyl]-*N,N*-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;

2-(4-Ethoxybenzyl)-1-[(2*S*)-1-methylpiperidin-2-yl)methyl]-*N,N*-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;

2-(4-Isopropoxybenzyl)-1-[(2*R*)-1-methylpiperidin-2-yl)methyl]-*N,N*-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide;

and pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof.

11. A compound according to any one of above claims for use as a medicament.

12. The use of a compound according to any one of claims 1-10 in the
15 manufacture of a medicament for the therapy of pain.

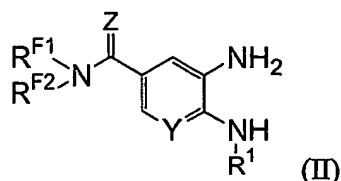
13. The use of a compound according to any one of claims 1-10 in the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment of cancers.

20 14. The use of a compound according to any one of claims 1-10 in the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment of multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, Huntington's chorea, transplant rejection or Alzheimer's disease.

15. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound according to any one
25 of claims 1-10 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

16. A method for the therapy of pain in a warm-blooded animal, comprising the step of administering to said animal in need of such therapy a therapeutically effective amount of a compound according to any one of claims 1-10.

17. A method of producing a compound comprising the step of reacting a compound represented by formula (II) with $R^2OArXCOA$:



wherein

5 R^{F1} and R^{F2} are independently electron-withdrawing groups;

Z is selected from O= and S=;

R^1 is selected from C_{1-10} alkyl; C_{1-10} alkyl substituted by at least one of halogen, cyano, acetoxymethyl and nitro; C_{2-10} alkenyl; C_{2-10} alkenyl substituted by at least one of halogen, cyano, acetoxymethyl and nitro; C_{2-10} alkynyl; C_{2-10} alkynyl substituted by at least one of halogen, cyano, acetoxymethyl and nitro; R^3R^4N - C_{1-6} alkyl; $R^3R^4NC(=O)$ - C_{1-6} alkyl; R^3O - C_{1-6} alkyl; $R^3OC(=O)$ - C_{1-6} alkyl; $R^3C(=O)$ - C_{1-6} alkyl; $R^3C(=O)NR^3$ - C_{1-6} alkyl; $R^3R^4NSO_2$ - C_{1-6} alkyl; $R^3CSO_2N(R^4)$ - C_{1-6} alkyl; $R^3R^4NC(=O)N(R^5)$ - C_{1-6} alkyl; $R^3R^4NSO_2N(R^5)$ - C_{1-6} alkyl; aryl- C_{1-6} alkyl; aryl- $C(=O)$ - C_{1-6} alkyl; heterocyclyl- C_{1-6} alkyl; heterocyclyl- $C(=O)$ - C_{1-6} alkyl; substituted aryl- C_{1-6} alkyl; substituted aryl- $C(=O)$ - C_{1-6} alkyl; substituted heterocyclyl- C_{1-6} alkyl; substituted heterocyclyl- $C(=O)$ - C_{1-6} alkyl; and C_{1-10} hydrocarbylamino;

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R^2 is selected from C_{1-6} alkyl, substituted C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{2-6} alkenyl, substituted C_{2-6} alkenyl, C_{2-6} alkynyl, substituted C_{2-6} alkynyl, C_{3-6} cycloalkyl, substituted C_{3-6} cycloalkyl, aryl, substituted aryl, and C_{5-6} heteroaryl, and substituted C_{5-6} heteroaryl;

20

R^3 , R^4 and R^5 are independently selected from -H, C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{2-6} alkenyl, C_{2-6} alkynyl, and a divalent C_{1-6} group that together with another divalent C_{1-6} group forms a portion of a ring;

X is a C_{1-10} divalent group that separates groups connected thereto by one or two atoms;

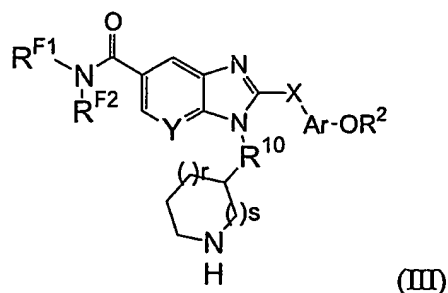
25

A is selected from -OH, -Cl, -Br, and -I;

Ar is a C_{4-12} divalent aromatic group; and

Y is selected from -CH= and -N=.

18. A method of producing a compound comprising the step of reacting a compound represented by formula (III) with formaldehyde:



wherein

- 5 r and s are selected from 0, 1 and 2;
 R^{10} is selected from C_{1-6} alkylene, $-O-$, and $-NR^{11}-$, wherein R^{11} is a C_{1-6} alkyl;
 R^{F1} and R^{F2} are independently electron-withdrawing groups;
 X is a C_{1-10} divalent group that separates groups connected thereto by one or two atoms;
- 10 Ar is a C_{4-12} divalent aromatic group;
 R^2 is selected from C_{1-6} alkyl, substituted C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{2-6} alkenyl, substituted C_{2-6} alkenyl, C_{2-6} alkynyl, substituted C_{2-6} alkynyl, C_{3-6} cycloalkyl, substituted C_{3-6} cycloalkyl, aryl, substituted aryl, and C_{5-6} heteroaryl, and substituted C_{5-6} heteroaryl; and
- 15 Y is selected from $-CH=$ and $-N=$.